

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 PA-03 PRS-01 USIA-15 AID-20

NIC-01 RSR-01 /089 W

----- 121980

R 021614Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 495

INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, XA, OAU, OATUU

SUBJECT: ULC LEADER REVIEWS OATUU PROGRESS

BEGIN SUMMARY: ULC SC, ODEYEMI REPORTS NO REAL EFFORT HAS BEEN MADE SINCE APRIL MEETING IN ADDIS ABABA TO GET OATUU EFFECTIVELY OPERATING AND ORGANIZATION THUS STAGANT. LACK OF ACTION IN SETTING UP SECRETARIAT HAS WASTED ENTHUSIASM WHICH MARKED ORGANIZATION'S BIRTH, AND LITTLE ACTIVITY EXPECTED UNTIL ILO HOLDS REGIONAL CONFERENCE IN NAIROBI THIS NOVEMBER. END SUMMARY.

1. NIGERIAN ULC SEC GEN ODEYEMI, WHO ALSO AN ASST. SEC GEN OF ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN TRADE UNITY (OATUU), TOLD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EMBOFF AUGUST 1 THAT HE HAS BEEN ACTING OATUU SEC GEN FOR

PAST MONTH, HAVING RECEIVED CABLE SOMETIME IN EARLY JULY FROM KENYA'S AKUMU ASKING HIM (ODEYEMI) TO TAKE CHARGE QUOTE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE UNQUOTE AS AKUMU WAS UNABLE TO DEVOTE HIMSELF TO OATUU PROBLEMS. ODEYEMI SAID HE IS PRESENTLY GRAPPLING WITH TWO IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS:

- (A) TRYING TO OBTAIN FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR OATUU FROM OATUU MEMBER UNIONS AND OAU GOVERNMENTS, AND
- (B) TRYING TO GET OATUU SECRETARIAT SET UP.

2. FINANCING: ODEYEMI NOTED OATUU IS TO BE FINANCED BY LEVIES ON EACH MEMBER TRADE UNION CENTER, BUT THESE FUNDS HAVE NOT BEEN FORTHCOMING. HE SAID HE MET BOTH OAU SEC GEN NZO EKANGAKI AND ASST. OAU SEC GEN PETER ONU, WHEN THEY VISITED LAGOS IN MID-JULY. HE DISCUSSED WITH THEM FINANCIAL POSITION OF OATUU, BUT SAID NO SOLUTION COULD BE FOUND ON THIS MATTER. ODEYEMI, HOWEVER, PRAISED OAU FOR SETTING UP OATUU, AND EXPRESSED HOPE OATUU WOULD SOON RECEIVE FINANCIAL HELP FROM OAU. (FYI: ODEYEMI GAVE IMPRESSION THAT SINCE OATUU WAS, IN EFFECT, AN OAU ORGANIZATION, IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR OAU TO HELP FUND OATUU.)

3. SECRETARIAT: ODEYEMI REHASHED STORY OF OATUU TEAM VISIT TO ACCRA (WHICH WAS CHOSEN AT ADDIS AS OATUU HQ.) AND PROMISES MADE BY GHANA GOVT. TO HELP ESTABLISH OATUU SECRETARIAT. SO FAR, HE CLAIMS, NRC HAS FAILED TO FOLLOW THROUGH ON THESE PROMISES, AND HAS NOT MADE OFFICE SPACE OR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE. HE FEELS NRC MAY BE HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS ON THIS, PERHAPS BECAUSE GHANA TRADE UNION LEADERS WERE NOT GIVEN TOP OATUU POSITIONS. MEANWHILE, ODEYEMI HAS RECEIVED LETTER FROM GOZ OFFERING ASSISTANCE IN ESTABLISHING OATUU OFFICE IN KINSHASA (FOR WHICH ZAIRE HAD LOBBIED AT ADDIS) AND WILLINGNESS TO MAKE LARGE OFFICE BUILDING AVAILABLE FOR SECRETARIAT. ODEYEMI INDICATED CHANGE IN HQ SITE WOULD PRESUMABLY REQUIRE FORMAL OATUU ACTION SO HE HAS NOT RESPONDED TO GOZ OFFER, BUT PERSONALLY COULD SEE NO OBJECTIONS TO BASING OATUU OFFICE IN ZAIRE. UNTIL SOMETHING CONCRETE CAN BE DONE TO GET SECRETARIAT UNDERWAY, ODEYEMI PLANS TO USE HIS OFFICE AS TEMPORARY OATUU HEADQUARTERS. HE IS RELUCTANT TO DO SO OPENLY AS HE FEELS THIS MAY EMBARRASS FMG BY CREATING IMPRESSION THAT BOTH OAU LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND OATUU ARE UNDER CONTROL OF NIGERIA. (COMMENT: WE DOUBT FMG WOULD BE RELUCTANT TO HAVE HQ HERE DESPITE CONCERN EXPRESSED BY ODEYEMI.) SUCH AN IMPRESSION HE ADDED, MIGHT CREATE EVEN MORE PROBLEMS FOR OATUU, BY DISCOURAGING MEMBER UNIONS FROM TAKING FULL PART IN SOLVING OATUU FINANCIAL PROBLEMS.

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4. PART OF PROBLEM IN GETTING OATUU FUNCTIONING, ODEYEMI BELIEVES, IS BASIC CONFLICT BETWEEN "COMMUNIST" AND "DEMOCRATIC" UNIONS. FOR EXAMPLE, HE NOTED HE SPENT TWO WEEKS OF ILO CONFERENCE IN DISCUSSIONS WITH OATUU CHAIRMAN SYLLA (GUINEA) OVER PROPER DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY AMONG OATUU OFFICERS. SYLLA WANTED CHAIRMAN TO BE PRINCIPAL OATUU OFFICER WITH POWER CENTRALIZED IN HIS OFFICE, WHILE ODEYEMI INSISTED THAT SECRETARY GENERAL POSITION SHOULD BE CENTRAL AUTHORITY. ODEYEMI CLAIMS SYLLA'S ARGUMENT WOULD HAVE GIVEN FORMER AATUF UNIONS EFFECTIVE CMTRLOVER OATUU ACTIVITIES, BUT ODEYEMI'S PERSISTENCE KEPT OATUU UNDER CONTROL OF MODERATE UNIONS, LEFT-WING UNIONS, AND THEIR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NATIONS'S GOVERNMENTS, NOW LESS INTERESTED IN OATUU THAN THEY MIGHT HAVE BEEN IF THEY CONTROLLED LEADERSHIP POSITION.

5. ODEYEMI FEELS OATUU IS LIKELY TO REMAIN DORMANT UNTIL ILO HOLDS ITS REGIONAL MEETING IN NAIROBI THIS NOVEMBER. HOWEVER, HE BELIEVES OATUU WILL REMAIN IN EXISTENCE AND FINAL SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF ORGANIZATION IS UNLIKELY TO BE KNOWN FOR NEXT YEAR OR SO.

6. COMMENT: ODEYEMI'S REMARKS, AS COULD BE EXPECTED, TEND TO BUILD ON HIS PERSONAL ROLE IN KEEPING OATUU ALIVE. NEVERTHELESS, THEY DO POINT OUT REAL PROBLEMS FACING OATUU. AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS MAY NOW FEEL THEIR ROLE IN PROMOTING AFRICAN TRADE UNION UNITY WAS COMPLETED WHEN OATUU WAS FOUNDED, AND ITEM IS NOW OFF OAU AGENDA. ULTIMATE SUCCESS OF OATUU IS IN HANDS OF TRADE UNIONS. DISENCHANTMENT, IF IT EXISTS, ON PART OF FORMER AATUF UNIONS COULD BRING ABOUT THEIR WITHDRAWAL FROM OATUU, AFTER A RESPECTABLE PERIOD, AND THEIR PLACING BLAME FOR OATUU DEMISE ON LACK OF LEADERSHIP FROM MODERATE OATUU LEADERS. CONTINUED DELAY IN ESTABLISHING SECRETARIAT, AND LACK OF ANY OTHER SIGNS OF LIFE IN OATUU, WOULD HELP MAKE SUCH CHARGES PLAUSIBLE. EMABSSY WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION CONFIRMING AKUMU'S DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO ODEYEMI, OR ANY INDICATION IF AKUMU MAY ALSO HAVE CONTACTED OTHER THREE ASSISTANT SECGENS ALOV SAME LINE. REINHARDT

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 AUG 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973LAGOS06250
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: LAGOS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730862/aaaabtvd.tel
Line Count: 204
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09-Jan-2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <28-Jan-2002 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ULC LEADER REVIEWS OATUU PROGRESS BEGIN SUMMARY: ULC SC, ODEYEMI REPORTS NO REAL EFFORT
TAGS: ELAB, XA, OAU
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005